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Renovation of Casco Township Hall is complete

By James Windell

What used to be a six-bay garage for fire trucks has now been converted into a large room to be used as a community center. Located at the Casco Township Hall, the renovation includes new restrooms and entry doors – all ADA accessible.

In a program celebrating the opening of the community activities room on Monday, April 20, 2026, Casco Township Supervisor Allan W. Overhiser said that previous space the building was insufficient to handle Township business and senior activities, as well as elections. "I would like to thank Representative Andrews for his leadership in making our project a priority in the State Budget," he said. "The improvements will provide much needed space for current senior activities and enable future opportunities."

REP JOEY ANDREW, ALLAN OVERHISER ,DIANE RIGGOZI

The project at the Casco Township Hall, 7104 107th Avenue, South Haven, was spurred by a conversation Casco Township Trustee Mary Campbell had with State Representative Joey Andrews over the prior conditions of the building. The seniors were exercising in the former garage, which was not a finished area. Speaking at the ceremonial opening of the room, Andrews said that when he first visited it, he could tell something about its history. "The prior senior center space was essentially a garage with a lingering engine oil smell, reinforcing the need for a healthier, more welcoming facility."

Funding for the project came in part through a $200,000 Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) grant sponsored by Andrews, State Representative of the 38th District. Additional funding for the project came from the Casco Township General fund and a restricted building fund earmarked for Township capital projects. The new addition also houses storage for election equipment and offices for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. The total project cost came in just over $500,000.

Speaking about the funding provided to Casco Township, Rep. Andrews said in his remarks that funding was pursued as part of remaining COVID-era funds and that he advocated for the project despite Casco being a small rural township.

"After the 2024 election shifted the House majority," Andrews said the crowd gathered for the opening, "an attempted to claw back prior appropriations briefly put the project's funding at risk. "I pushed back, noting the project was already underway and clawing back would harm the township and the contractors. The appropriation was ultimately restored and allowed to go through, enabling completion."

Andrews said he was honored to have played a role in bringing $200,000 in state funding to make this vision a reality for Casco Township. "This beautiful new Senior Activity Center is exactly the kind of dignified, welcoming space our older residents deserve, and I look forward to seeing it serve the community for generations to come," he added.

In her remarks Diane Rigozzi, Director of Van Buren County Senior Services, thanked the Casco Township Board and Supervisor Alan Overhiser for initiating the partnership with Senior Services. "With the new facility, activities can expand beyond what was possible in the prior cramped garage space, especially exercise programming, "Rigozzi said. She said that Casco Township residents could now participate in the new room at the township hall for various activities for seniors.

In concluding the ceremony, Overhiser pointed out the renovation was necessary because of growing senior needs and the need for larger space due to early elections. "The site is now intended as a multipurpose area," he said, "and our planned uses include Senior Services, Casco Township board meetings, elections, improved storage for election materials and machines, and a clerk's office."

Urgent Care facility to locate in South Haven

By James Windell

Mayor Annie Brown has been advocating for urgent care in South Haven for more than two years. And when Tom Capps was waging his successful campaign for City Council from Ward 2, he often talked to citizens about the need for urgent care in the area.

Recently, at a South Haven City Council workshop, when priorities for the City were being discussed, council members agreed that a priority was urgent care for South Haven.

Early in April, 2026, Corewell Health submitted an Application for a Site Plan Review to the South Haven Charter Township. The application indicated that Corewell Health recognized the need and plans to build a medical office building and urgent care suite at 71989 CR 388 (Phoenix Street) in South Haven Charter Township.

"One of the biggest concerns in South Haven is the closure of urgent care facilities," says Mayor Brown. Brown wrote a lengthy letter in 2024 citing her own family's medical experience and pointing out that Bronson Hospital had once provided urgent care. She wrote that her son received critical urgent care help at Bronson 10 years ago, but "now the urgent care is closed" and residents as well as tourists have to drive to Holland and other cities in order to receive emergency treatment.

Andrea Finnigan, Lead Communications Specialist for Corewell Health, shared in an email on April 16, 2026, that Corewell Health wants to restore urgent care for the community. "We are planning a 15,000-square foot integrated care center facility in South Haven Township to help meet community need for convenient access to urgent and specialty health care closer to home," she wrote.

The process of getting approvals will take some time to complete, but the filing of an application for site plan review is a first step in that process. According to South Haven Charter Township Supervisor Ross Stein, the application for a site plan review is likely to be on the agenda for the township planning commission for their May, 2026 meeting.

Prior to the application for the site review being submitted, Corewell Health met with City officials. That, to Mayor Brown, indicates that Corewell Heath is serious in their intent. e.

"I'm thrilled that Corewell took the time to meet with our City Manager and is planning to provide our community with the healthcare and services we need," says Brown.

According to Finnigan, "Pending the finalized land purchase agreement and site plan approvals, we hope to begin construction later this year and open to the community in 2027."

City Council votes to increase parking rates and fines

By James Windell

Revenues into South Haven's Beach Fund, which comes from parking fees, has remained consistent over the last several years.

However, with a new lifeguard program going into effect this month, the Beach Fund needs to increase revenues.

Along with lifeguard program, the Beach Fund supports annual expenses related to beach maintenance, parking enforcement and beach enforcement.

At the Monday, April 20, 2026 regular meeting of the South Haven City Council, the council was asked to consider passing two resolutions and amend the City's Code of Ordinance in order to increase revenues into the Beach Fund.

The first proposed resolution, Resolution 2026-13, was a resolution to establish new parking fees. The resolution proposed to increase metered parking rates to $3 an hour (instead of the previous $10 a day) and raise weekly permit rates from $30 to $50 for a weekly pass. It is estimated that these rate increases will increase revenues to $800,000. The increased revenues would be used to cover the additional expenses for the lifeguard program, capital improvement projects, as well as additional operation and maintenance costs for the municipal beaches.

The second resolution, Resolution 2026-14, proposed to adopt parking restrictions throughout the City of South Haven. The staff recommended changing paid parking hours from 9am to 8pm.

In addition, the council was asked to consider increasing the minimum parking fine to $45. Also, the fine would go up to $75 if not paid within 7 days; and to $100 if not paid within 60 days. It was also recommended that the city ordinance (Section 82-87 of the Code of Ordinances) be amended to allow for the impounding of vehicles for scofflaw offenders with fines in excess of $1000.

Neither resolution nor the amendment to the Code of Ordinance drew any opposition within the City Council and all were passed unanimously. All changes will take effect in 10 days.

Soccer team on a roll

Sophie Militello defends pass in first half action.

By Tom Renner

A fog shrouded Ratcliffe Field where players couldn't see one end of the pitch to the other didn't prevent a clear-eyed South Haven girls soccer team from rolling to a 6-0 victory Berrien Springs. South Haven scored three goals in each half. With a young team of only two seniors, the Lady Rams have posted back-to-back conference wins after suffering five losses to open the season.

GingerMan Raceway has full season of racetrack events

Jill, Dan & Zach Schnitta

by James Windell

When Dan Schnitta offered me a ride in his Lamborghini Huracan, I thought it would be a leisurely drive around the curvy 2.1-mile racetrack.

Instead, I got a white-knuckle view of the GingerMan racecourse sitting low in the Italian sports car with speeds approaching 110 miles per hour.

That was my introduction to the man who built the GingerMan Raceway just a few miles outside of South Haven.

Celebrating their 30th anniversary this year, the GingerMan Raceway has a full season of events ranging from SCAA sporting events to motor bike time trials to musical concerts, with the signature event the Gridlife Midwest Festival in June.

Looking at the lineup of events that fill up every weekend, there's something that is sure to interest anyone who enjoys racing and speed – all in a family friendly atmosphere on the 340 acres that comprise the GingerMan Raceway.

In May alone, there is a Fast Guys Club, RPM Speed Speed-Sport, CGI Motor Sports, GingerMan's Evening Test 'n' Tune, the Vintage Sports Car Drivers, and SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) Track Night in America.

Returning for its third year in June is the Bagger Racing League, an ever-growing event at the GingerMan filled with competitive racing, good times and "cool Harley dudes."

A recent interview with Dan Schnitta, his son Zach, the raceway's general manager, and his daughter Jill, the CFO of the business, revealed not only the plans for the summer but a history of the race course that was built on an apple orchard in 1994 and 1995.

"Back then, I looked at multiple locations in the area, but faced zoning restrictions and other barriers," Dan Schnitta said. "This site worked out because there were effectively no zoning restrictions. But my intent was to give people a good time and create a welcoming, non-intimidating environment."

What he desired, Schnitta said, was a place that would parallel his experience of running the GingerMan Tavern in Chicago near Wrigley Field from 1977 to 2012.

Schnitta explained the name GingerMan came from the book by J.P. Donleavy, "The Ginger Man," published in the 1950s. The book is a darkly comic, chaotic, and often abrasive novel about a charmingly destructive young American. Although Schnitta has had a colorful life and a love of fast cars, he is not otherwise like Donleavy's character.

While the events at the racetrack may often focus on speed, Schnitta says that the track also emphasizes being laid-back and "not corporate" – while still being serious about safety. "Here our visitors, especially younger groups, are given more freedom than at many tracks and we allow them to hang out in the woods and camp areas," said Schnitta. "We have a strong safety record for cars, and we've never had any overnight hospitalizations associated with events here."

The events that are scheduled, explained Zach Schnitta, will be appealing to spectators on most weekends between now and the end of October. "Weekdays are often for private groups," he said. "We have pro teams practicing, or the police use it for training, or we have corporate testing and we even have commercials that are being shot here."

Zach added that the Gridlife Festival in June is the biggest event at the GingerMan Raceway each year. "It's a four-day festival," he said, "and activities include time attack and time trials, drifting, a car show by the pond, food vendors, concert with DJs and hip hop/EDM at night, arcade, and silent disco." He said that attendance at this event typically ranges from 6,000 to 10,000 people. "It's a major draw for the area," he said.

Not one, but two new go-karting groups will take over the track. The Dark Kart Club from Ohio will bring over 300 go-karts September 18 to 20, 2026. A smaller go-kart group, RPM Speed-Sport will use the race course May 9 and 10 this spring.

The American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association (AHRMA) returns with their always cool vintage and historic bikes this summer on July 24 to 26. Summer Track Days will again have an all-women's day on October 18. Last year they had 30 female drivers, and they expect more this year, according to Zach Schnitta.

Also, Zach says that NASA will be at GingerMan three times this season. "They will bring sprint racing, enduro racing, time trials and even some HPDE," he adds. HPDE is High Performance Driver Education. Their three events are June 19 to 21, July 31 to August 2 and October 2 to 4.

The GingerMan Raceway is located at 61414 Country Road 388, South Haven. To follow all of the scheduled events, visit the GingerMan Raceway's website at www.gingermanraceway.com

Class of 1961 to hold reunion

The amazing Paw Paw Class of 1961 wishes to invite all classmates along with those from the great classes of: 1959, 1960,1962 and 1963 to join us at our 65th Reunion Party. Date: Friday, September 18, Time: 3:00 to 6:00, Where "Old" Paw Paw High School building (31133 E Red Arrow Hwy, 49079) Parking plenty, accommodating: canes, walkers & wheelchairs, no stairs, Food: light sandwiches, salads, snacks, water, coffee, soft drinks (no alcohol allowed). To confirm, ask questions or make suggestions: email: judsonmckinley32@gmail.com Phone: 2695014224

Paw Paw renews village manager's contract

PAW PAW - The Paw Paw Village Council at its April 13, village council meeting, approved a contract extension for Village Manager Bryan Myrkle.

The village council approved the contract as presented. It had been recommended for approval by the council's finance committee. The three-year contract will see Myrkle's salary go from $103,000 in 2026 to $105,000 in 2028.

Myrkle told The Courier-Leader, "I very much appreciate the opportunity to continue serving as Paw Paw's Village Manager. There are a number of exciting things on the near horizon for this community, and I am excited to be a part of them."

Lawton Village Council adopts DDA bylaws

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWTON - The Lawton Village Council adopted the Lawton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Bylaws at the council's Tuesday, April 14, meeting. The resolution was recommended by the Lawton DDA and will bring the village one step closer to a village RRC designation.

In another area, the village council approved the 2026 Master Fee Schedule. Council members approved a renewal membership to the Michigan Municipal League at a cost of $47,551, a slight price increase over last year, according to Lawton Village Council President Josh Appleby.

A public hearing was set for May 12, for the Lawton Village Council to receive public comment on the Headlee Act.

Lawton Village Manager Todd Hackenberg gave the council an update on a search for a new village police chief. Interviews are currently being conducted on the police chief search.

Hackenberg said there is an open position on the Village of Lawton Public Works Department. The position has been posted on Indeed, MRWA, and the Village of Lawton website.

Hackenberg told the council that vandalism occurred at Oak Grove Cemetery, and an individual has been identified and charged.

Hackenberg is working with Van Buren County courts system to determine the amount owned and potential community service for the individual to be done at the cemetery.

Hackenberg said the Lawton American Legion is seeking help to clean headstones at Oak Grove Cemetery. Cleaning is scheduled for May 16-17, beginning at 9 a.m. Interested individuals should reach out to the Lawton American Legion for more information.

Doug Lawrence, representing the Lawton Youth Softball Baseball Board, told the village council that opening day is set for Saturday, April 25, with games officially kicking off on April 27. Lawrence said two travel teams are playing games on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and are utilizing Field 4 for practice as well. Two tournaments have been scheduled for this fall.

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Mattawan Consolidated named 2025–2026 Capturing Kids' Hearts® National Showcase District

Mattawan Consolidated School announced it has been named a 2025–2026 Capturing Kids' Hearts® National Showcase District, a prestigious recognition that highlights the district's commitment to building strong relationships, fostering positive school culture, and supporting student success.

The Capturing Kids' Hearts® National Showcase District Award honors districts that are achieving outstanding results through implementation of the Capturing Kids' Hearts® Process. Recipients demonstrate exceptional performance, a strong culture and climate, and a deep commitment to ensuring that every student feels safe, connected, and valued.

Mattawan Consolidated School earned this distinction based on leadership and staff dedication to implementing Capturing Kids' Hearts across campuses, as well as the recognition of a significant majority of its schools receiving the 2025–2026 Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase Schools® Award.

Each year, Capturing Kids' Hearts recognizes schools and districts nationwide that are strengthening school culture and increasing student connectedness. This honor highlights Mattawan Consolidated School's ongoing commitment to building relationships that drive academic and personal success for all students.

PP Village Council amends and reissues Special Land Use and new site plan approval for Warner Vineyards

On April 13, the Village of Paw Paw amended and reissued a Special Land Use authorization and a new Site Plan approval for changes planned at the Warner Vineyards outdoor entertainment venue. The actions were taken by the Planning Commission and Village Council, respectively.

Warner's proposed changes include an enlarged stage, additional decking along the river, a bridge over the river intended for patron use, and a row of specially designed and constructed shipping containers that will serve as outdoor food service, bar service and permanent restrooms. The containers will also serve as a base for several new rows of elevated seating. Warner purchased property from Honor Credit Union to make room for the new structures.

Patrick Warner told the village that his talent booking is limited by the smaller stage he has been using, and a larger stage more closely fitting the entertainment industry's standards will allow him to work with larger, better-known acts.

The village's Special Land Use ordinance for outdoor entertainment venues requires compliance with a comprehensive list of regulations intended to help prevent any potential negative effects outside the bounds of the property. These include emergency and security planning, insurance, liquor control, patron conduct, sanitation, trash and rubbish management and several others, according to Paw Paw Village Manager Bryan Myrkle.

Two areas the village Planning Commission paid close attention to are parking and noise. Because the Warner parking lot is used for general admission seating during the concerts, there is no on-site parking for the events. This would not be allowed typically, but Warner has secured nearby parking permissions from St. Julian Winery, Van Buren County and Tapper Ford. This was deemed to be adequate.

The issue of excessive noise and sound, however, remains unresolved, according to Myrkle. Warner will be allowed to start the concert season as planned; however, the village will continue to seek solutions and remedies for those residents who experience disruptive sound and noise. The village acknowledged that while the Warner concerts are a net benefit to the community, it should not come at the expense of those neighborhoods close to the venue.

District Library Board attorney presents opinion on Library Branch issues

The Courier-Leader received an e-mail from Van Buren District Library Board member Sandy Hanson, who received an opinion dated Feb. 19, 2026, on library branch issues from attorney, Anne Seurynck.

It reads as follows:

"The Van Buren District Library ("VBDL") requested our legal analysis of the continuing validity and legal effect of the 1997 and 1999 Branch Agreements, their interaction with the District Library Agreement, and the legal and operational consequences if a township declines to execute a proposed addendum or terminates a Branch Agreement. VBDL also asked for our explanation of how a participating municipality can withdraw from VBDL and the consequences that would follow. Our analysis follows."

Questions Presented and Short Answers

1. Are the 1997 and 1999 Branch Agreements still legal and binding? Yes, they remain legal and binding unless terminated according to their terms. While a few of the participating municipalities have cited the age of the agreements as the reason for questioning the validity, the age of the contract is not relevant in this case.
2. How do the Branch Agreements interact with the District Library Agreement? The Branch Agreements coexist with, but are subordinate to, the District Library Agreement and the District Library Establishment Act.
3. Do the Branch Agreements obligate VBDL to pay building and maintenance costs? No, the Branch Agreements do not obligate VBDL to pay building or maintenance costs, except for utilities and janitorial services.
4. If a township does not sign the proposed addendum to a Branch Agreement, what happens legally and operationally? Nothing. The existing Branch Agreement remains in effect if the addendum is not signed.
5. If a township terminates a Branch Agreement:
   a. What steps are required for termination? Without cause, 180 days' notice to the other party. For a breach of the agreement, 30 days' notice to cure the breach.
   b. Is a township-wide vote required? No.
   c. What happens to the existing branch library facility, equipment, collections, and staff? The equipment, collection, and staff remain with VBDL. The existing facility remains with the participating municipality, or whoever owns the property.
   d. Is Van Buren District Library statutorily obligated to operate a Branch Library within a particular municipality if that municipality's governing body terminates the Branch Library Agreement? No, VBDL does not have a statutory obligation to have a branch library in any location.
   e. If the branch agreement was terminated, would the township still be required to collect the library's millage and transfer that money to VBDL? Yes.
   f. If a township terminates the branch agreement, is that township still a participating municipality of VBDL? Yes, if a township terminates its branch agreement it remains a participating municipality of VBDL.
   g. Do VBDL appointed board members owe a fiduciary obligation to VBDL or the participating municipality that appointed the board member? The VBDL Board member has a fiduciary obligation to the VBDL not the participating member that made the appointment.
   h. Can a participating member replace or withdraw an appointed board member for any reason, or no reason at all, during that board member's appointed term? No, the participating municipalities do not have authority to remove district library board members.

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Lawrence Township receives $472,000 through CDB Grant program

Lawrence Township has announced it has been awarded $472,000 through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

The funding will be used to operate a Homeowner Rehabilitation Program designed to assist income-eligible residents with critical home repairs and improvements.

The township has selected Market One to serve as program administrator, bringing professional expertise to guide the initiative from application through project completion. Housing Administrator Matthew Sanborn played a primary role in developing and coordinating the program on behalf of Lawrence Township, ensuring the community is well-positioned to make the most of this significant investment.

"This grant represents a meaningful opportunity to improve the safety and livability of homes right here in Lawrence Township," said Sanborn. "We are grateful to MSHDA for this investment in our community and look forward to helping eligible homeowners access the assistance they need."

A public information meeting for Lawrence Township and Village of Lawrence residents to learn more about the Homeowner Rehabilitation Program, eligibility requirements, and the application process will be held Wednesday, May 6, at 5:30 p.m. at Lawrence Township Hall, 411 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence.

Residents unable to attend but wish to learn more about the program are encouraged to contact Molly McFadden at: McfaddenM@Marketone.org.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federally funded initiative administered in Michigan by MSHDA. It provides communities with resources to address a wide range of community development needs, with a focus on benefiting low- and moderate-income persons.

Weather buoy placed, ready for action

The Lake Michigan Weather Buoy off South Haven has been placed.

It is located about 2.5 miles offshore.

The buoy is a project of the South Haven Steelheaders with support from several businesses and organizations.

It has been placed in the lake annually since 2014.

Last year there were over a half million visits to it. Here is the link to it -- https://data.freeboard.tech/station/45168/

Photo by Tom Renner

Two honored with PRIDE awards by SH BOE

By James Windell

One of the most poignant moments at any South Haven School Board meeting is usually when the Pride Awards are given out.

This was certainly true at the Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, when two noteworthy individuals were handed Pride Awards by Superintendent of Schools Ana Aleman-Putman.

The first award went to Kate Hybels, who is a Success Coach at Lincoln Elementary School. Kate Hybels was recognized for her dedication, compassion, professionalism, and for helping students and staff feel supported and valued. She was noted for regularly checking in on classrooms and uplifting others – often with reminders like "Hey, you're worth it."

Hybels recently led a group of CAP (Challenge Acceptance Program) third graders in a student-led community problem-solving project using survey data and community interaction.

A student Pride Award was given to South Haven High student Kaylynn Norfolk. Kaylynn was recognized for perseverance and growth, emphasizing accountability, responsibility, and rebuilding trust after serious prior bullying-related circumstances that nearly led to expulsion.

Kaylynn was praised for collaborating with staff, counselors, and family and for following a plan to graduate on time with full credits. She was said to embody the school's tenets: integrity, collaboration, accountability, and respect.

It was also noted that Kaylynn participated in sports, peer-to-peer, and other community activities.

South Haven City Council holds budget workshop

By James Windell

South Haven's Finance Director Michelle Argue went over the proposed 2026-2027 budget at a City Council Budget Workshop on Monday, April 13, 2026.

A city budget is the formal financial plan that shows all the money a city expects to receive and all the money it plans to spend over the next fiscal year.

Argue was introduced by City Manager Kate Hosier who said that the finance director would "walk through" the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds and Enterprise Funds for 2026-2027.

Over the next nearly 90 minutes, Argue reviewed revenues and proposed expenditures for the next fiscal year. She began, however, by pointing out that there is $6, 653, 900.00 throughout the budget "for the different departments and funds." She then stated that over the next seven years, the city will need $63,968,157.00 to meet expected expenditures.

Argue went on to say that the 2026 ad valorem taxable value was $670,515,049.00, which represents a 6.38% increase. With a special tax value of $8,713,914.00, the total taxable value comes to $679,228,963.00.

She reviewed the budget for the General Fund, which accounts for resources traditionally associated with governments that are not required to be accounted for in another fund. In the City of South Haven, the functions of the General Fund include Legislative, General Administration, Parks, Police, Fire-Rescue, Ambulance, Development and Public Services activities not recorded in Special Revenue or Enterprise Funds. The General Fund is the designated repository per Michigan law for ad valorem property taxes. Other revenue sources for the General Fund are state-shared revenues and transfers from other funds.

Argue told the City Council that the General Fund showed overall use of a fund balance of $2,304,610 (expenditures over revenues). The starting fund balance was approximately $73,231,536. She said that General Fund revenues would be $11,795,569, with expenditures estimated to be $12,631,263. That means that the fund would use $855,694 from the fund balance.

She pointed out that property taxes account for 47.54% of the General Fund revenues. General fund expenditures go to various departments, but personnel costs account for 42.1% of total expenditures and contractual services make up the second largest segment of expenditures, amounting to 13.29% of the total.

Special revenue and enterprise fund highlights included a proposed Police Department budget of $3,595,533. Among equipment purchases for the police are new radio equipment which will cost $97,000. Funding for South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) is proposed to be $1.2 million.

Other areas in the proposed 2026-2027 budget include money for highways and streets. The budgets for highways and streets is $928,403. Argue also discussed the budget for the library, senior services, airport authority, South Haven Recreation Authority and South Haven Schools.

A second budget workshop will take place on Monday, April 20, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

City Manager Hosier said that the second workshop will continue discussion of the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget and that the City Council will be informed about other funds such as debt service, capital projects, internal service, fiduciary, and component unit funds.

Women Who Care donate funds to Casco beach project

By James Windell

Lakeshore Women Who Care, a group of community-minded women who meet quarterly to hear from and financially support non-profit organizations serving Allegan County, recently gave $12,900 to the Casco Township Beach Access Project.

The check was presented at the Casco Township Nature Preserve in Casco Township on April 8, 2026, to support the "Back to the Beach" project in Casco Township.

"Back to the Beach" is an effort by Casco Township to fund restoration of beach access at the Casco Township Nature Preserve. Stairs to the beach installed at the Nature Preserve in 2014 were destroyed by high water and erosion in 2020. Since then, the nearly 20-acre Preserve has lacked public access to the Lake Michigan shoreline. Public access to Lake Michigan is the community's and the Park and Recreation Committee's number one priority.

Julie Cowie, Casco Township resident and member of the Lakeshore Women Who Care, made the initial presentation to the group at its March 12, 2026 meeting. She was joined by Kelly Hecker, Recording Secretary of the Casco Township Parks and Recreation Committee, who answered questions about the project.

The funds collected from the Lakeshore Women who Care have been matched by the Allegan County Community Foundation (ACCF), as the March 12 presentation date fell during the ACCF's matching challenge, "Allegan County Gives." As a result, an additional $10,000 from the Allegan County Community Foundation was leveraged for the $980,000 project.

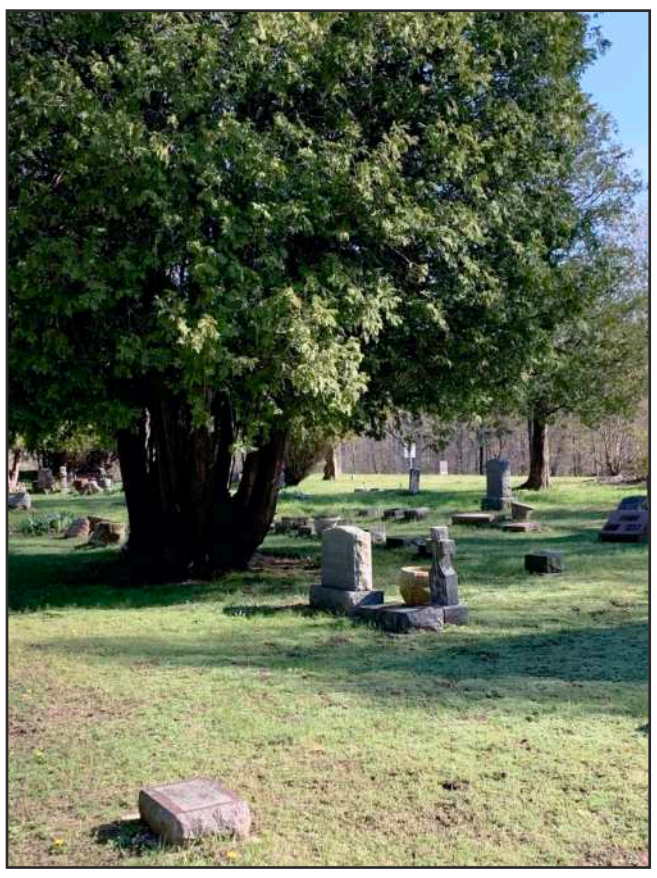
The "Back to the Beach" project is dependent on larger grant programs in the state of Michigan. Funding from a .25 millage collected for Parks and Recreation in Casco Township will also support the project. If grant funds are awarded, construction to restore public access at the Casco Township Nature Preserve is expected to start in late summer of 2027.

"We so appreciate your invest0ment in this project," said Julie Cowie in thanking the Lakeshore Women Who Care.

The Casco Township Nature Preserve is located at 770 Blue Star Highway, South Haven. It boasts a third of a mile of accessible paved trail, new restrooms, drinking fountains, picnic tables, benches, ample parking, and a spectacular view of Lake Michigan.

People wishing to financially support the "Back to the Beach" project at the Casco Township Nature Preserve can make a contribution through the fund at the Allegan County Community Foundation.

First Hebrew congregation donates tree maintenance gift to parks



By James Windell

There's been a noticeable decline in the health of evergreen trees in the Hebrew section of Lakeview Cemetery. But the First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven has offered a solution.

The First Hebrew Congregation approached the City's arborist last fall to begin a conversation about the condition and long-term care of evergreen trees in this particular section of the cemetery. As part of that effort, the Congregation sought professional guidance and obtained input and quotes from arborist service providers in order to develop a thoughtful maintenance plan to present to the City.

At the Parks Commission meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, the First Hebrew Congregation offered to provide a gift of tree maintenance for this section of Lakeview Cemetery.

The gift, as outlined by Parks and Streets Superintendent Aaron Priebe, would entail four professional treatments. The contribution is intended to provide preventative care for several evergreen trees within that area, helping to protect their health and longevity. The proposed maintenance includes mite control, insect pest control, fertilization, and minor tree pruning, with a total of four scheduled service visits.

Proactive care of these trees is said to be important to preserve the character of the section and to help avoid more significant issues or costs in the future. The total value of the donated services is estimated at $3,700. Acceptance of this gift would allow the City to address maintenance needs in a timely manner without impacting the current budget, while continuing to demonstrate responsible stewardship of cemetery grounds and respect for this important area.

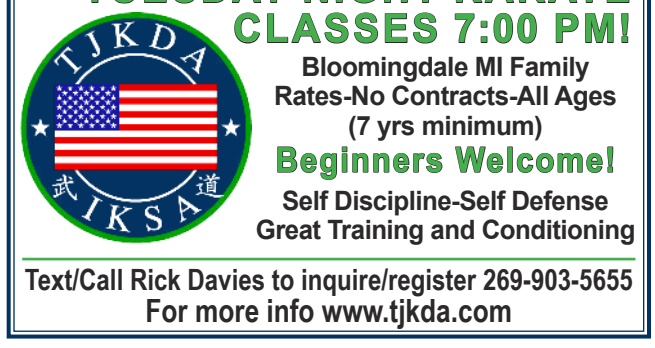
In contrast, the rest of the cemetery is mostly large hardwood shade trees which do not require a comparable maintenance program.

The Park Commission membership showed strong support for this donation, with one member referring to it as a "no-brainer."

A motion was made to recommend to the City Council that the donation be accepted. After a second to the motion, a vote was taken and the vote was unanimously in favor. The matter will now go before the City Council for final approval.

"These trees were planted decades ago by the Congregation and the City working together," says Dana Hullinger, a member of the First Hebrew Congregation, "and they were planted to help reduce the noise coming off of Blue Star Highway and to maintain a sense of privacy and peace.

"We want to preserve them as long as possible."



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Bangor soccer girls prevail

By John Raffel

BANGOR — The Bangor Vikings girls earned their second conference soccer victory with a hard-fought 2–1 win over the Hartford Huskies last week.

Andrea Barajas and Magdaly Gonzalez each found the back of the net for the Vikings. Goalkeeper Solexey Calderon was solid in net, recording eight key saves to help secure the win. It was a true team effort, with strong determination and teamwork displayed throughout the match.

On Saturday, April 18, the Vikings faced a tough challenge against Sturges while dealing with multiple injuries, falling 8-0.

Despite the result, Solexey Calderon continued her strong play with nine saves, and Daniela Ramirez-Medrano contributed with three saves in goal.

Bangor is 3-3 after a 3-0 win at Comstock on Monday.

Bangor will play at Lawton on April 24 and is home on April 27 with Niles Brandywine and on April 29 with Bloomingdale.

Mattawan wrestler celebrates 34 wins

Zach Miller had 34 pins for the 2025-26 Mattawan wrestling season.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Zack Miller recently finished a season for Mattawan High School where he achieved a rather unique milestone.

Miller was a senior for Mattawan who passed the 100-win mark in his final year.

Another major highlight for him, Miller said, was defeating wrestlers who had beaten him in the past.

Among the favorite wins was against a top 10 ranked wrestler.

Miller, at 150 pounds, sustained a concussion in his last tournament and was not able to continue for the rest of the season. He had hoped to advance to the state tournament for the first time so the early end of the season was disappointing.

Still, it was Miller's best season.

"I improved a lot," he said., "I changed my stance and I changed a couple of shots."

Millers strengths on the mat "was definitely takedowns and probably backspins. When we had our Mattawan wrestling banquet, I got the award for the most pins, 34 for the year."

Miller had 36 wins and 15 losses with 34 pins. The key to getting a pin, Miller said, was "putting the kid on his back by getting him off balance, get him moving, set up your shot and set up your finish."

Mattawan had a young team this season with a lot of first-year wrestlers.

Miller wrestled for 13 years.

"I'll miss all the friends I made," Miller noting wrestling was his main sport. "It's more competitive. It's you and only you on the mat."

Paw Paw softball drops first game

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's softball team was 13-0 before losing 1-0 to the Penn Varsity Kingsmen on Thursday.

Penn scored in the bottom of the 10th on a walkoff single by Logan Rumble.

Lauren McKellar took the loss for Paw Paw. She allowed one run on six hits, striking out eight and walking four in going the distance.

Kailey Nichols, Elizabeth Vanderburg and Bella Clemons had one hit each for Paw Paw.

Paw Paw swept Edwardsburg 6-1 and 9-8 on April 14. MacKellar fanned 11 batters the first game. Stella Shearer had four hits the second game.

SHHS's Cunningham named first team all-state

South Haven junior point guard Ly'Nique Cunningham has been named as first team Division 2 All-stater for the second consecutive season by the Michigan Sportswriters. This past season she averaged 24 points a game as the Lady Rams won the SAC Lakeshore conference title a third consecutive year. Among her team-leading stats on the season was averaging six steals and six rebounds a game.

Paw Paw baseball loses to Edwardsburg, sweeps Harper Creek

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's varsity baseball played undefeated Edwardsburg on Tuesday, April 14 and lost 10-7 in the opener.

Remi Dempsey and Bryn battled on the mound for six innings. Leading the hitting attack was Benny Flanders, Gavin Alters and Dempsey. Each of them collected a hit and an RBI. Hayden Criger, Carter Buhl, Bry Carlson, and Caden Bowen added the only other hits.

Game 2 was called due to darkness in the top of the fourth with the Eddie's up 5-2. Game will be completed at a later date.

Paw Paw played state-ranked Harper Creek on Friday.

In Game 1, the Red Wolves offense scored early and often and held on for a 8-7 victory. Landen threw 3-plus innings, allowed 3 earned, and had 3 K's. Buhl pitched the final 3-plus innings, allowed 1 ER, and had 2 K's. Buhl got out of some high pressure situations.

Ryan Holmes, Hayden, and Flanders led the offensive attack. Holmes was 2-4 with a double and two runs scored. Criger went 2-4 with 3 RBI's. Flanders was 2-4 with an RBI. Maverick and Bowen each added a single and an RBI. Remi and Allers each collected a hit.

In Game 2, the Red Wolves were down 5-2 heading into the last inning before the offense decided to take over for a 6-5 victory.

Maverick earned the win on the mound going four innings, allowing three earned runs, and a strikeout. Criger came in and shut the door with a scoreless last inning to earn his second save of the season. Criger had 2 strikeouts. Holmes and Maverick each had a multi-hit game. Holmes went 2-3 with a run scored. Maverick went 2-for-2 at the plate. Criger was 1-for-3 with 2 RBI's. Alejandro had a clutch RBI single in the last inning. Bowen, Dempsey, and Flanders each added an RBI.

"Two great team wins," Paw Paw coach Derek Vanderburg said.

The Red Wolves record now stands at 5-3.

Upcoming Games: April 23rd DH at Coloma

April 24th, at home, vs. Vicksburg (finish game- top of 4th)

South Haven tennis teams fall

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — South Haven lost 8-0 to Niles Brandywine on April 14.

Results were as follows;

Singles:

No. 1 - Sydney Olson, Niles Brandywine def. Addy Cook, South Haven, 6-1 , 6-0.

No. 2 - Louisa Peterson, Niles Brandywine def. Harley Nail, South Haven, 6-0 , 6-1.

No. 3 - Chelsy Olson, Niles Brandywine def. Leah Becker, South Haven, 6-2 , 6-0.

No. 4 - Khloe Austin, Niles Brandywine def. Violet Burgoyne, South Haven, 6-3 , 6-2.

Doubles:

No. 1 - Karleigh Byrd, Niles Brandywine - Lily Gill, Niles Brandywine def. Maria Booth, South Haven - Sarah Diaz-Salinas, South Haven, 6-0 , 6-0.

No. 2 - Allison Murray, Niles Brandywine - Holly Anderson, Niles Brandywine def. Mireya Arvizu, South Haven - Sheyla Gonzalez, South Haven, 6-2 , 6-2

No. 3 - Aleyna Vollman, Niles Brandywine - Khloe Vanderboegh, Niles Brandywine def. Regan Nail, South Haven - Remmi Rigozzi, South Haven, 6-0 , 6-1.

No. 4 - Makenzi Myer, Niles Brandywine - Alaina Roberts, Niles Brandywine def. Grace Armendariz, South Haven - Khloi Smith, South Haven, 6-1 , 6-0

South Haven baseball sweeps Allegan

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN -- South Hav n Varsity Rams won big over Allegan 10-0 on Tuesday in game 1 of a SAC conference doubleheader.

South Haven got on the board in the top of the first inning after Max Verseput hit a sacrifice fly, Charlie Hiatt hit a sacrifice fly, Johnathan Bevevino singled down the right field line, and South Haven Varsity Rams scored on a wild pitch, each scoring one run.

South Haven added one run in the second. Schneider walked, making the score 5-0.

The Rams added two runs in the third.Allegan made an error, making the score 7-0.

Verseput earned the win for the Rams. aheallowed one hit and zero runs over four innings, striking out eight and walking none. Dial took the loss for Allegan. He went three innings, surrendering seven runs (four earned) on five hits, striking out three and walking two. Hayes threw one inning of no-run ball for South Haven in relief. He gave up zero hits, striking out two and walking none.

Wyatt Dotson, the number seven hitter for South Haven, led the way with two RBIs. He went 1-for-3 on the day. Isaac Chalupa and Bevevino each collected two hits for South and Schneider led South Haven with three walks. Overall, the team had six walk.

Jaden Schneider stole two bases. South stole four bases in the game. The didn't commit a single error. Bevevino had the most chances in the field with 11.

South Haven won the second game 5-0.

Verseput grounded out, scoring two runs, for a 2-0 lead early in the game.

South Haven added to the lead in the top of the third inning after Verseput doubled to right field, and Bevevino flew out, each scoring one run.

Jacob Bosma earned the win for South Haven. The right-handed pitcher allowed zero hits and zero runs over three innings, striking out five and walking two.

Hudson and Dotson each came on in relief for South Haven Varsity Rams and shutdown Allegan.

Verseput and Hiatt drove in one run each for the winners. Bosma went 2-for-4 at the plate to lead South Haven in hits.

Lawton soccer girls defeat Comstock

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — The Lawton Blue Devils had a strong offensive performance on April 16 with a 6-1 win over Comstock.

"Even without offensive threat sophomore Addy Miller, who's still not cleared to return, Lawton powered through with a big team effort," Lawton coach Abby Burris said.

Junior Lilleonah Mandujano had a hat trick three goals and one assist, freshman Maddie Vette added two goals, and junior Gabi Mendez had one goal.

Junior Jaelyn Auton dished out two assists, while Taylor Whipple and Karen Laviolette each added one.

"A big shutout to the defensive crew too — sophomore keeper Lila Karsen, along with Taylor Whipple, Karen Laviolette, Emily Schubert, and Gabby Hayes, helped lock it down," Burris said.

Lawton is 2-2 overall. The team lost to Kalamazoo Christian 8-0 on April 20 and now has three straight home games, April 22 with Constantine, April 24 with Bangor and April 29 with Schoolcraft. There's a road game on May 4 with Parchment.

Lawton is 1-2-0 in the Southwestern Athletic Conference at 2-0-1. Parchment and Allegan are both 1-0.

Lawrence track teams earn third place

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — The Lawrence boys and girls track and field teams each earned third place overall at the Bellevue Invitational on Friday, backed by a strong collection of top-three finishes.

For the boys, Evan Broyles led the way with a win in the 3200 meters and a third-place finish in the 1600. Kaiden Blackmore added another victory for Lawrence by taking first in the 300 hurdles. The Tigers also picked up third-place finishes from Andon Offord in the 200 and Xavier Glover in the 400.

Lawrence's relays delivered as well. The 4x100 team of Elijah Kuhens, Colton Anders, Christian Barboza-Gutierrez, and Jake Theragene placed third, and the 4x200 team of Alexander Gardner, Jake Theragene, Colton Anders, and Andon Offord also finished third.

In the throws, Alexander Gardner got second in the shot put and third in the discus.

On the girls side, Kaylin Leyva took a third-place finish in the 400, while Aurora McQueen added two more top-three results with third in both the 1600 and 3200.

The Tigers also got third in the 4x200 relay with Colleen McCaw, Carolina Mancera, Zoey Soppelsa, and Kaylin Leyva, and third in the 4x400 relay with Leyva, Mancera, Soppelsa, and Kacey Reyes.

In the field events, Carolina Mancera secured a runner-up finish in the discus.

Bangor baseball loses pair

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Monday night Bangor baseball traveled to Decatur for a SW10 matchup.

"Our bats struggled to catch a barrel and we ended up losing both games 10-0 in five innings" Bangor coach Nick Cox said. "We will be back in action Thursday when we host Cassopolis."

On April 13, Bangor hosted the Cardinals of Bloomingdale in a SW10 matchup.

"We ended up winning both games, 11-1 and 12-1. We pitched well, with good defense," Cox said. "We were very aggressive on the base paths, swiping 24 bags."

On Friday, Bangor hosted the Parchment Panthers.

'In game 1 we went into the sixth inning with a 6-5 lead," Cox said. "We struggled to find the strike zone after that and ended up losing 12-6. This was our first loss of the season. Game 2 was suspended at the top of the fifth inning with a 5-5 tie.

"Carson Pullins went five innings with two earned runs in game 1."

Isiah Irvine went 2-for-2 in hitting in game 2.

VIEWPOINT

Artemis II gives me hope that Mars colony is possible

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

Artemis II isn't just another spaceflight, it's a statement about who we are, what we value, and whether we still have the will to push beyond the edge of the known.

When astronauts swung around the far side of the Moon—the so-called "dark side," more accurately the far side never visible from Earth they temporarily lose all communication with home. No live feeds. No reassuring voice from Mission Control. Just silence, distance, and the kind of isolation that defined the earliest era of exploration. It's a moment that will feel almost primitive in an age of constant connectivity and that's exactly why it matters.

More than 50 years ago, the Apollo 11 mission proved something extraordinary: that the United States could take on a seemingly impossible challenge and achieve it within a decade. When Neil Armstrong stepped onto the lunar surface in 1969, it wasn't just a technological triumph, but a cultural one. It united a divided nation, inspired a generation, and demonstrated that bold ambition could translate into reality. As a teen I beamed with pride knowing we had accomplished the unbelievable.

But here's the uncomfortable truth: we haven't been back. Personally I find that mighty strange. I know the Shuttle programs had different objectives, but to say we haven't went back to the moon in more than a half century is perplexing.

For decades, the Moon became a symbol not of progress, but of something we once did. Something filed away as history rather than a steppingstone. Artemis II changes that narrative. It's not about repeating Apollo. It's about restarting the journey.

Flying around the Moon's far side is a deliberate choice. It tests navigation, communication limits, and human endurance in deep space—conditions we must master before attempting longer missions, including sustained lunar presence and eventual trips to Mars. This isn't sightseeing; it's preparation.

And there's something deeper at play here. In 1969, we went to the Moon largely because of geopolitical competition. The Space Race drove urgency and funding. Today, the motivation is more complex: scientific discovery, international collaboration, economic opportunity, a renewed sense of purpose.

That shift matters. Artemis II represents a transition from a sprint to a strategy.

Critics will argue that the billions spent on space exploration could be used here on Earth. It's a fair question—but it misses the broader impact. The Apollo program accelerated advancements in computing, materials science, and telecommunications. Artemis is poised to do the same with new technologies in propulsion, sustainability, and robotics. Investing in space has always been, indirectly, an investment in ourselves.

There's also the matter of inspiration, something harder to quantify but impossible to ignore. A new generation has grown up without defining space achievement. Artemis II has the potential to change that, to once again make space exploration feel immediate and human, not distant and archival.

When that spacecraft slipped behind the Moon and radio contact faded, it echod a moment from Apollo missions when astronauts described the far side as both eerie and awe-inspiring. But this time, the silence will carry a different message: not "we've done this before," but "we're doing it again because we have somewhere further to go."

If Apollo 11 was proof of concept, Artemis II is proof of commitment.

And this time, the goal isn't just to visit the Moon.

It's to stay, to build, and to use it as the launchpad for the next giant leap. That next giant leap is Mars. I probably won't see it in my lifetime, but just envisioning a colony on Mars gives me much hope for humanity.

Sheriff's Report-Lawton man faces several charges

Van Buren Conty Sheriff's Office Uniform Response had a flee and elude in Decatur Township. A traffic stop was initiated over speeding and failing to signal. "The 18-year-old from Lawton fled at a high rate of speed and stopped after he was approaching another deputy set up with stop sticks. The investigation found that he was intoxicated during the incident. It was also found he took his parents' car without permission. He was lodged for operating under the influence of alcohol, flee and eluding, and UDAA (unlawful driving away automobile)," said Sheriff Abbott.

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response did its yearly Defensive Tactics Training/ Updates recently. "They go over different tactics, scenarios, hands-on moves and practice, new legal updates, etc," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a lost individual in the woods by the Eagles Club, just north of Lawton. "The individual had an argument with another subject and left on foot into the woods. She became lost and called 911 for help. Our canine unit and sergeant with a drone responded to the scene and located the individual. She was checked out by EMS, then driven home," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a larceny in Columbia Township. "Different items were stolen off a tree service vehicle that was unattended and parked. Anyone with any information is asked to call our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

April 12-18 was Animal Control Appreciation Week and National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. "Thank you to all our staff in that capacity and the staff across the United States for all you do. I cannot say enough good things about our staff here at Van Buren County. Thank you to all the citizens who reached out to the staff as well," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled an assault incident in Almena Township. "The investigation found that a felonious assault took place, the victim was held against their will, an arson occurred to personal property, the suspect interfered with telecommunication, used a pneumatic gun during the incident, and resisted and obstructed. He was ultimately charged with all the offenses and lodged," said Sheriff Abbott.

"I assisted Bangor Police Department with a stolen vehicle reported out of Berrien County. The vehicle was in Bangor, which I happened to be only a few blocks away on patrol when the officer went to stop it. We conducted a felony stop and put the driver in custody. Berrien County came to the scene and took custody of the driver, and the vehicle was TOT (Turned Over To) to the victims/owners," said Sheriff Abbott.

Undersheriff Casey Davis attended the Spring Advisory Board Meeting at the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) for the Criminal Justice Program. At the meeting, several topics are covered such as classes, topics, ride-a-longs, etc.

Dr. Jill Newton returns to Bangor to speak about Tanzania

By James Windell

When the Bangor Historical Society holds its annual meeting on April 30, 2026, Jill Newton, who graduated from Bangor High School, will return as the featured speaker.

Now, Dr. Jill Newton, the former Bangor student, is a professor of Mathematics Education at Purdue University, and is known for her work in teacher education, curriculum research, and international study abroad programs.

After beginning her tenure at Purdue University in 2008, Newton founded Purdue's Tanzania Study Abroad Program. Each year she leads students on a month long immersive program where students teach in Tanzanian schools, study global education systems, and engage in cross cultural learning.

Students who accompany her to Tanzania take classes as part of their Global Studies minor and get to live at Fish Eagle Point during their stay. The curriculum is focused on teaching across cultures and learning about the education system worldwide, but most importantly, students are given the opportunity to interact and learn from a culture other than their own. Students leave with more knowledge about service learning and being a good global citizen. They are given the tools to serve in their own communities and have memories that will last them a lifetime.

After a brief meeting of the Bangor Historical Society, Newton will share her love of Tanzania and its history, culture and people. Newton spent 12 years teaching math and science not only in Tanzania, but also in Papua New Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other countries before taking a position at Purdue University.

The Bangor Historical Society's Annual Meeting takes place on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 7:00 pm sat the Odd Fellows Hall, above the Historical Society's Museum, 235 W. Monroe Street, Bangor. For more information, visit the Bangor Historical Society website at Bangormihistory.com

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OBITUARY

Mervyn William Bremmer III

August 2, 1946 - March 29, 2026

Mervyn William Bremmer III, of Lawton, Michigan, passed away peacefully at home on March 29, 2026, after a short illness, with his loving family by his side.

He was born on August 2, 1946, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mervyn attended South High School, where he was actively involved in band, ROTC, and the Order of DeMolay. He proudly served his country with two years in the Navy Reserve and two years of active duty in the United States Navy.

On August 28, 1965, Mervyn married the love of his life, Patricia Doty. Together they shared 60 wonderful years of marriage and built a strong, loving family. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Mervyn is survived by his beloved wife, Patricia Bremmer; his sons, Mervyn William Bremmer IV, Jim (Marcie) Bremmer; his grandchildren, Haylie (Charles) Douglas, Dacoda Bremmer, Ty Bremmer, Ethan Bremmer, and Trent Bremmer; his step-grandchildren, Blake (Grace) Parker and Chase Parker; his great-grandsons, Jace Douglas and Ashton Douglas; as well as step-great-grandchildren, Becca and Owen Parker. He is also survived by two brothers and two sisters.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister, and his son, Al Bremmer.

Mervyn dedicated 30 years of service to the Portage Police Department, where he was respected for his commitment to his community. He also found great joy in coaching youth sports in Lawton, positively impacting many young lives.

After retirement, Mervyn embraced life to the fullest. He enjoyed fishing trips to Canada, riding his Gold Wing motorcycle, going on cruises, and most importantly, spending time with his family.

A Celebration of Life will be held for family and friends on Saturday, May 2, 2026, from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Paw Paw Eagles Club. Burial with honors will take place at Fort Custer National Cemetery on Monday, May 4, 2026, at 10:30 AM.

Mervyn will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew him.

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Scott Club Celebrates New Lift

By James Windell

Five years ago, Tom Hoatlin, who uses a wheelchair, could not attend a program on the second floor of the historic Scott Club. There was no way for him to access the main meeting room in the building that was constructed in 1892.

However, Hoatlin was back at the Scott Club on Friday, April 17, 2026, for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate completion of the new lift.

President Carol Anderson Kunze welcomed attendees telling them that the elevator/lift idea had been discussed for a long time, but after a 2018 building inspection, it was listed by the Board as a priority. However, she also said that Hoatlin's inability to get up to the second floor where programs are usually held was a significant impetus for finding a way to build the lift.

Kunze said that in late 2024, grant money funded a feasibility study by Keystone Designs and the recommendation that came out of that study was to install a vertical platform lift accommodating a wheelchair plus one other person, or up to three people. Construction on the lift began in January, 2026.

Kunze recognized several Scott Club members for project support including the building and grounds team members Anna Krajecki and Jay Campbell. She also thanked the grants team of Megan Iuusig, Sally Rehkopf, and Anna Krajecki for their work gathering funds for the project.

Krajecki, in making remarks prior to the ribbon cutting, thanked donors and community supporters and noted that fundraising ended up being the easiest part of the project. "Special thanks have to go to Carol and Don Hodgman as early supporters who helped build confidence and momentum," she commented.

For the ribbon cutting, Krajecki was given the honor of wielding the scissors to cut the red ribbon in recognition of her leadership and dedication to the project.

After the ribbon cutting, attendees were invited to enjoy refreshments and try out the lift.

Honored with the first official ride on the lift, Hoatlin emerged from his ride with a broad smile. It is noteworthy that he was present as he was assured that he will be able to ride up to the second floor in August, 2026 when he will be the featured speaker at a Scott Club program.

Kate Hinote Trio performs at South Haven Memorial Library

By James Windell

Detroit area-based singer and song writer Kate Hinote is on a tour of Michigan. She calls it her "Libraries as Listening Rooms" tour.

"Libraries are places where you can connect to people who actually want to listen to music," says Hinote about her tour of several Michigan cities. One of her stops will be at the South Haven Memorial Library on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Bringing her trio with her, Hinote, who has trouble placing her music in a specific genre, says that she will focus on their original music. "We put out our second album last year called 'Stowaways,' that has 10 new original songs, but in our concert we do have a few covers," she said. "We always do a few covers just to draw people in and hope they like our original music as well."

While her trio is often referred to as a contemporary folk ensemble rooted in storytelling, rich melodies, and an unmistakable chemistry between its members, Hinote in a recent interview said it's difficult to put their music into a genre. "It makes me crazy," Hinote noted with an infectious laugh, "because they've been forcing me to do that for so long. They make you pick a genre, but I always feel like it's never quite right."

Over the years that Hinote has been performing with her trio, made up of herself, guitarist David Johnson, and violinist Matthew Parmenter, as well as with the group called The Blueflowers, she and her band members called their music alternative folk. "However, when many people think of folk they think of very traditional artists, like Joni Mitchell or Joan Baez," Hinote remarked. "That doesn't reflect our music, so we just put contemporary in front of folk and go with that."

Hinote has been singing since she was three years. She says that her mother's favorite story is watching Kate standing on a chair in their backyard dressed in a pink frilly frock singing "Tomorrow" from "Annie." But it wasn't until she collaborated with her husband, Tony Hamera, beginning in 2004, that she discovered she could also write her own songs and that melodies came naturally to her.

That collaboration has resulted in several albums and a handful of EPs between the various Hinote/Hamera projects – which have won her an audience in Southeastern Michigan and around the state.

The Blueflowers, a Detroit-based band, grew out the songwriting collaboration between her and her guitarist/producer husband. She and Tony made an initial impression on the Detroit music scene in 2005 with the dream pop act, Ether Aura. When the two began experimenting with a more "Americana" sound, they decided to form a different band entirely, and in 2009 The Blueflowers were born.

The Kate Hinote Trio will perform at a free concert at the South Haven Memorial Library, 314 Broadway Street, on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 6:00 pm

Dems donate to non-profits across county

The Van Buren County Democratic Party has hit a one-year milestone in their DEMonstrating CommUNITY program, celebrating their success in aiding non-profit organizations throughout the county. Through monthly drives Democrats have donated to community food and resource pantries from Mattawan to South Haven, including Eleanor's Pantry in Paw Paw, Mattawan Area Pantry, Decatur Human Services, South Haven's We Care Community Resource Center, and Gobles Methodist/Kendall Area Ministries Food Pantry.

It began in March 2025 with a cry for toilet paper from Paw Paw's Eleanor's Pantry. The Van Buren Democrats' members and allies donated hundreds of rolls of toilet paper. The program has continued every month since. Each organization chooses one item and Democrats work to deliver as much of that item as they can gather. From cases of hearty soups in Mattawan, to dish soap in Gobles, to 4,000 loads of laundry detergent needed at the South Haven based We Care organization, the Democratic Party has donated hundreds of items and cash donations each month.

One example of CommUNITY financial support was collected in February, when Democrats participated in the South Haven We Care Community Resource Center's annual "Island Sit." The monthly drive brought in over $500 in donations to this worthy cause; and with a matching dollar for dollar offer, they raised over $1,000.

The Van Buren County Democratic Party's DEMonstrating commUNITY program has been a huge success and they will continue their monthly drives next month by collecting donations of pasta for the Mattawan Area Pantry. If you or your organization are interested in participating, please find information about each month's drive at vanburendems.org to see the current item being collected and the non-profit being served.

Diane and Lisa to present Gershwin Concert in South Haven

By James Windell

George and Ira Gershwin's music didn't just define the Jazz Age. It expanded what American music could be.

Writing some of the most enduring songs of the 20th century – songs like I Got Rhythm, Embraceable You, Someone to Watch Over Me, and The Man I Love – the Gershwin compositions merged classical forms with jazz harmonies, rhythms, and an improvisatory spirit.

On Sunday, April 26, 2026, Diane and Lisa will present their Tribute to Gershwin at the First Congregational Church in South Haven.

"One of our dear friends, Elaine Fluck, asked if we would present a concert of the songs of George and Ira Gershwin," says vocalist Diane Van Deurzen. "We agreed, but we have always loved their music."

In fact, when Diane and her partner Lisa Otey had a Harlequin Great Dane, they named it George Gershwin. "Since he was black and white like a piano," adds Diane. "Whenever we sing Someone to Watch Over Me, we dedicate it to him."

Pianist Lisa Otey notes that the duo has been singing the songs of George and Ira Gershwin throughout their 20 years of making music together. They have taken their act to jazz festivals, blues clubs and concert halls across Europe, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. Since moving from Tucson, AZ to St. Joseph in 2021, they have enjoyed bringing their jazzy blues sound to vineyards, breweries and restaurants around Michigan and Indiana. This Gershwin program is part of their Spring Music Series at the First Congregational Church.

Lisa said that two Gershwin tunes – Summertime and Our Love is Here to Stay – appear on their latest CD, "You Got What I Want."

Pointing out that George and Ira Gershwin created a perfect bridge from classical music to jazz, Diane says that now 100 years later "Their music still touches everyone."

"Every time we sing They Can't Take That Away From Me or Embraceable You, a smile crosses everyone's face and they hold each other a little closer," comments Diane. "And when we sing I Got Rhythm, Nice Work if You Can Get It, or Lisa plays her boogie-woogie version of Rhapsody in Blue, you can feel the energy of this music move through the crowd."

To make the concert a little more special, Lisa and Diane said that Elaine Fluck is hoping everyone will dress in the style of the 1920's and '30s to get in character for this afternoon of swinging jazz and beautiful ballads. If you do dress up for the concert, you will save $1 on your ticket price.

Diane and Lisa's Tribute to Gershwin will take place at the First Congregational UCC, 651 Phoenix Street, South Haven, on Sunday, April 26 at 3:00 pm. Tickets are $20 at the door, free for children 12 and under. For more information, call Diane & Lisa at (269) 637-3804 (opt. 5).

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PPHS Robotics Team qualifies for World Championship

The 2Paw Robotics Team (Team 5462) earned the best finishes in school history in all three of their events, won multiple awards, and finished as part of the third-place alliance at the Michigan State Championship at Saginaw Valley State University April 16 - 18. Their hard work and success have earned them a place on the world stage. By qualifying for the World Championship in Houston, Texas, Team 5462 is now raising funds to help cover registration and travel costs for the trip. To support the team and learn more, visit: 2pawr.org

Photos courtesy/ Paw Paw Public Schools

Ramageddon competes in state robotics championship

By James Windell

There are 531 FIRST Robotics Competition teams in Michigan. In fact, Michigan has more teams than any other state. However, only 160 high school robotics teams qualified for the FIRST in Michigan State Championship, held at Saginaw Valley State University this past weekend.

Ramageddon, the South Haven robotics team, was one of those teams competing in the state tournament.

"That makes qualifying for the FIRST in Michigan Championship a significant achievement, and one our team is proud to have reached," said Kim Wise, one of the Ramageddon coaches, after the four-day competition that began on Thursday, April 16, 2026.

After arriving at Saginaw Valley State University in Saginaw, Ramageddon set up their pits and prepared for robot inspections and practice matches. By 4:00 pm on Thursday, qualification matches began. Following a full day of matches on Friday, alliance selections were held to determine which 24 teams would move on to the playoffs.

Ramageddon was not selected for a playoff alliance, but the experience was both valuable and motivating, explained Wise.

"This weekend gave our team the chance to compete alongside not only the top teams in Michigan, but some of the best in the world," Wise said. "Our robot and team performed their roles effectively, and while the level of competition was exceptionally high, we held our own and posted solid performance statistics." Ramageddon ultimately placed 35th out of 40 teams.

In addition to what they learned in competing, Wise said that the students came home home with more than just knowing where they ranked among the teams in the event.

"Beyond the matches," Wise said, "the team gained a great deal from the event, including exploring career and college fairs, learning from other teams, and gathering ideas to build on for next season."

Since the robotics season is over for Ramageddon, they will get a short, but well-earned break. "Then," said Wise, "it's time to jump back into offseason activities."

This includes hosting a free summer skills camp for middle and high school students, organizing and hosting an annual STEM-a-Thon, recruiting new team members, holding weekly practices for students interested in next season's drive team, and co-hosting the Coloma Sunset Splash FIRST Tech Challenge Qualifier for middle school robotics teams.

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SPECIAL ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A SPECIAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN THE:
COUNTIES OF KALAMAZOO, BARRY, CALHOUN, ST. JOSEPH, AND VAN BUREN STATE OF MICHIGAN

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2026

KALAMAZOO REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY (KRESA) • COLON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS • MATTAWAN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
GALESBURG-AUGUSTA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS • VICKSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS • COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS • CITY OF PORTAGE

AT THE PLACES OF HOLDING THE ELECTION IN SAID MUNICIPALITIES AS INDICATED BELOW, VIZ:

BARRY COUNTY		
BARRY TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Barry Township, Hall11300 M-43
JOHNSTOWN TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Johnstown Township Hall, 13641 S M-37
PRAIRIEVILLE TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Prairieville Township Hall, 10115 S Norris Rd
CALHOUN COUNTY`		
BATTLE CREEK CITY	Precinct 5	Woodland Church 14425 S Helmer Rd
BEDFORD TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Bedford Lions Club, 22116 N. Bedford Rd.
LEROY TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Climax Township Hall, 110 N. Main St.
KALAMAZOO COUNTY		
BRADY TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Brady Township Hall, 13123 South 24th St.
BRADY TOWNSHIP.	Precinct 2	Chapman Memorial Church, 7520 East U Ave.
CHARLESTON TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Charleston Township Hall, 1499 South 38th St.
CLIMAX TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Climax Township Hall, 110 N. Main St.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Galesburg Baptist Church, 10100 Shadowlane Ave.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 2	Comstock Township Hall, 5858 King Hwy.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 3	Kalamazoo Christian Reformed Church, 5300 Comstock Ave.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 4	Northeastern Baptist Church, 6536 East G Ave.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 5	Church of God Family Worship Center, 5841 East H Ave.
COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 6	Kalamazoo Community Church, 2435 North 26th St.
COOPER TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1 & 4	Cooper Township Hall, 1590 West D Ave
COOPER TOWNSHIP	Precinct 2	Fire Station #2, 3160 McKinley St.
COOPER TOWNSHIP	Precinct 3	St. Ambrose Parish Activity Center, 1628 East G Ave.
KALAMAZOO TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Lakewood Fire Station, 3100 Lake St.
	Precinct 2	Northwood Fire Station, 2617 N. Burdick St.
	Precinct 3	Community Presbyterian Church, 811 Gorham Ln.
	Precinct 4	Westwood Fire Station, 1310 Nichols Rd.
	Precinct 5	Eastwood Library 1112 Gayle Ave.
	Precinct 6	Eastwood Fire Station, 2703 E Main St.
OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP	Precinct 2	Oshtemo Fire House #2 3500 S 6th St.
	Precinct 3	Oshtemo Branch Library, 7265 West Main St.
	Precinct 4 & 7	Voyage Church, 6339 Atlantic Avenue
	Precinct 5	Skyridge Church, 394 S Drake Rd
	Precinct 6	Oshtemo United Methodist Church,6574 Stadium Dr
	Precinct 8	Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Ave.
	Precinct 9	Centerpoint Church, 2345 N 10th St.
PAVILION TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Lakeland Reformed Church, 10442 S. Sprinkle Rd.
	Precinct 2	Country Christian Evangelical Free Church, 9286 South 36th St.
	Precinct 3	Pavilion Township Hall, 7510 East Q Ave.
PRAIRIE RONDE TWP.	Precinct 1	Prairie Ronde Township Hall, 14050 6th St.
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Gracespring Bible Church, 8643 Gull Rd
	Precinct 2	Gracespring Bible Church, 8643 Gull Rd
ROSS TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Sherman Lake YMCA, 6225 North 39th St.
	Precinct 2	Yorkville Community Church, 11523 E D Ave.
SCHOOLCRAFT TWP.	Precinct 1 & 3	Vicksburg United Methodist Church, 217 S Main St.
	Precinct 2 & 4	Schoolcraft Township Hall, 50 East VW Ave.
TEXAS TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Calvary Community Church 7829 5th St.
	Precinct 2	Texas Township Hall, 7227 W Q Ave.
	Precinct 3	KVCC Groves Campus, 7107 Elm Valley Dr.
	Precinct 4	Southridge Church, 6726 Texas Dr.
	Precinct 5	Southridge Church, 6726 Texas Dr.
	Precinct 6	Calvary Community Church 7829 5th St.
WAKESHMA TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Wakeshma Township Hall, 13988 South 42nd St.
CITY OF GALESBURG	Precinct 1	Galesburg City Hall, 200 E. Michigan Ave.
CITY OF KALAMAZOO	Precinct 2	The Fetzer Center, 2251 Business Crt
	Precinct 3	Faith Temple Church of God, 402 S Westnedge Ave
	Precinct 4	Third Christian Reform Church, 2400 Winchell Ave.
	Precinct 5	Wesley Foundation, 2350 Ring Rd North.
	Precinct 6	Kalamazoo RESA West Campus, 4606 Croyden Avenue
	Precinct 7	Douglass Community Association, 1000 W. Paterson St.
	Precinct 8	Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 120 Roberson St.
	Precinct 9	Girl Scouts Building, 601 W. Maple St.
	Precinct 10	Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, 3210 Virginia Ave
	Precinct 11	Eastside Community Center, 1301 East Main St.
	Precinct 12	Oakwood Bible Church, 4100 Oakland Dr.
	Precinct 13 & 15	St. Joseph Catholic Church-Bennett Building, 930 Lake St.
	Precinct 14	Centerpoint City Church, 326 W Cork St.
	Precinct 16 & 18	Converge Community Church, 3306 Lovers Ln.
	Precinct 17	Greenwood Reformed Church, 1815 Winton Ave.
	Precinct 19 & 20	Southern Heights Christian Reformed Church, 4141 East Hillandale Dr.
	Precinct 21	Parkview Hills Club House 3707 Greenleaf Cir
CITY OF PARCHMENT	Precinct 1	Parchment City Hall, 650 S Riverview Dr
CITY OF PORTAGE	Precinct 1	Westminster Presbyterian Church,1515 Helen Ave.
	Precinct 2	Calvary Chapel of Kalamazoo Valley, 5331 S Sprinkle Rd
	Precinct 3	Portage Parks & Recreation Offices, 320 Library Ln.
	Precinct 4	Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 9420 Portage Rd.
	Precinct 5	Pathfinder Church, 8740 S Westnedge Ave.
	Precinct 6	Zhang Portage Community Senior Center, 203 E.Centre Ave.
	Precinct 7 & 11	The Bridge Church, 7200 Angling Rd.
	Precinct 8	Chapel Hill United Methodist Church, 7028 Oakland Dr.
	Precinct 9 & 12	Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 1747 W. Milham Ave.
	Precinct 10	Prairie Edge Christian Reformed Church, 9316 Oakland Dr.
	Precinct 13	Kalamazoo First Assembly of God, 5550 Oakland Dr.
ST. JOSEPH COUNTY		
LEONIDAS TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Mendon Township Hall, 136 W Main St.
MENDON TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Mendon Township Hall, 136 W Main St.
PARK TOWNSHIP	Precinct 1	Mendon Township Hall, 136 W Main St.
VAN BUREN COUNTY		
ALMENA TOWNSHIP	Precinct 2	Almena Township Hall, 27625 CR 375
ANTWERP TOWNSHIP	Precinct 2	Antwerp Township Hall, 2481 Front Ave.
	Precinct 3	Antwerp Township Hall, 2481 Front Ave.
	Precinct 4	Antwerp Township Hall, 2481 Front Ave.
	Precinct 5	Antwerp Township Hall, 2481 Front Ave.

TO VOTE ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSITIONS LISTED BELOW:
THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS WILL APPEAR ON THE BALLOT:

KALAMAZOO REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY (KRESA) SPECIAL EDUCATION MILLAGE RENEWAL AND RESTORATION PROPOSAL 1.4862 MILLS FOR 6 YEARS AND .0138 MILLS FOR 6 YEARS TO RESTORE MILLAGE REDUCTION

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency, 1819 E Milham Ave, Portage, Michigan 49002, telephone: (269) 250-9200.

COLON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SINKING FUND MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL 1.2906 MILLS FOR 8 YEARS

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Colon Community Schools, 400 Dallas St, Colon, Michigan 49040, telephone: (269) 386-2239.

MATTAWAN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL OPERATING MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSAL EXEMPTING PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE AND OTHER PROPERTY EXEMPTED BY LAW 19.4227 MILLS FOR 4 YEARS

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Mattawan Consolidated School District, 56720 Murray St, Mattawan, Michigan 49071, telephone: (269) 668-3361.

GALESBURG-AUGUSTA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS GENERAL OBLIGATION UNLIMITED TAX BOND PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING AND SITE PURPOSES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED $11,240,000

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools,1076 N 37th, Galesburg, Michigan 49053, telephone: (269) 484-2000.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT THE BONDS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, IF APPROVED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE ELECTORS AT THIS ELECTION, WILL BE GENERAL OBLIGATION UNLIMITED TAX BONDS PAYABLE FROM GENERAL AD VALOREM TAXES.

VICKSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOLS GENERAL OBLIGATION UNLIMITED TAX BOND PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING AND SITE PURPOSES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED $64,135,000

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Vicksburg Community Schools, 301 S Kalamazoo Ave, Vicksburg, Michigan 49097, telephone: (269) 321-1000.

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COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS GENERAL OBLIGATION UNLIMITED TAX BOND PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING AND SITE PURPOSES IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED $23,700,000

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Comstock Public Schools, 6138 King Highway, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49048, telephone: (269) 250-8900.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT THE BONDS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, IF APPROVED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE ELECTORS AT THIS ELECTION, WILL BE GENERAL OBLIGATION UNLIMITED TAX BONDS PAYABLE FROM GENERAL AD VALOREM TAXES.

CITY OF PORTAGE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the City of Portage offices, 7900 S Westnedge Ave, Portage, Michigan 49002, telephone: (269) 329-4511.

Drop boxes are available at each local jurisdiction for returning your absent voter application and/or ballot. Sample ballots can also be found at www.michigan.gov/vote.

To comply with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), voting instructions will be available in audio format and in Braille. Arrangements for obtaining the instructions in these alternative formats can be made by contacting the township or city clerk listed below in advance of the election. The in-person location will have a voter assist terminal (VAT) available for voters with disabilities.

Absent voter ballots must be mailed to voters no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1. Registered voters may contact their local Clerk to obtain an application for an absent voter ballot. On Election Day, voters may apply for, receive, and submit absent voter ballots in person from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the locations below. For any other questions relating to the election process, please contact your local Clerk:

BARRY COUNTY			
Barry Township	Clerk, Debra Knight	11300 M-43, Delton, MI 49046	(269) 623-5171
Johnstown Township	Clerk, Sheri M. Babcock	13641 S. M-37 Highway Battle Creek, MI 49017	(269) 721-9709
Prairieville Township	Clerk, Rod Goebel	10115 S Norris Rd, Delton, MI 49046	(269) 623-2726
CALHOUN COUNTY			
Battle Creek City	Clerk, Victoria Houser	10 N Division Street Rm 111	(269)966-
Bedford Charter	Township Clerk, Joyce Feraco	115 S Uldriks Dr Battle Creek, MI 49037	(269) 965-1999
Leroy Township	Clerk, Nicole Hardish	8146 4 Mile Road, East Leroy, MI 49051	(269) 979-9421
KALAMAZOO COUNTY			
Brady Charter Township	Clerk, Reagan Hunter	13123 S. 24th Street, Vicksburg, MI 49097	(269) 649-1813
Charleston Township	Clerk, Alese LePert	1499 S 38th St, Galesburg, MI 49053	(269) 665-7805
Climax Township	Clerk, Sarah DeBoer	110 N. Main St. Climax, MI	(269) 746-4103
Comstock Charter Township	Clerk, Nicole Beauchamp	5858 King Highway, Kalamazoo, MI 49048	(269) 381-2360
Cooper Charter Township	Clerk, DeAnna Janssen, CMC	1590 West D Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49009	(269) 382-0223
Kalamazoo Charter Township	Clerk, Lisa Mackie	1720 Riverview Dr., Kalamazoo, MI 49004	(269) 381-8082
Oshtemo Charter Township	Clerk, Dusty Farmer	7275 W Main St, Kalamazoo, MI 49009	(269) 375-4260
Charter Township of Pavilion	Clerk, Karen E. Siegwart	7510 East Q Ave., Scotts, MI 49088	(269) 327-0462
Prairie Ronde Township	Clerk, Dale Smith	14050 S 6th Street, Schoolcraft, MI 49087	(269) 679-5666
Richland Township	Clerk, Tami Penny	7401 N. 32nd Street Richland, MI 49083	(269) 629-4921
Ross Township	Clerk, Mary Stage	12086 M-89, Richland, MI 49083	(269) 731-4888
Schoolcraft Township	Clerk, Eska Brown	50 East VW Avenue Vicksburg, MI 49097	(269) 649-1276
Texas Charter Township	Clerk, Emily Beutel	7227 W Q Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49009	(269) 375-1591
Wakeshma Township	Clerk, Michael Fry	13988 S 42nd St, Fulton, MI 49052	(269) 778-3728
Galesburg City	Clerk, Lisa McNees	200 E Michigan Ave, Galesburg, MI 49053	(269) 665-7000
Kalamazoo City	Clerk, Scott A. Borling, CMC	241 West South St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 337-8000
Parchment City	Clerk, Shannon Stutz	650 S Riverview Dr., Parchment, MI 49004	(269) 349-3785
Portage City	Clerk, Erica Eklov, CMC	7900 S Westnedge Ave, Portage, MI 49002	(269) 329-4511
ST. JOSEPH			
Leonidas Township	Clerk, Julie Censke	53312 Fulton Rd, Leonidas, MI 49066	(269) 496-7837
Mendon Township	Clerk, Donna Cupp	136 W Main St, Mendon, MI 49072	(269) 496-7708
Park Township	Clerk, Lari Roberts Clerk, Lari Roberts	53640 Parkville Rd, Three Rivers, MI 49093	(269) 279-7860
VAN BUREN COUNTY			
Almena Township	Clerk, Sandi Rickli	27625 CR Paw Paw, MI 49079	(269) 688-6910
Antwerp Township	Clerk, Chantel Reyna	2481 Front Ave. Mattawan, MI 49071	(269) 688-2615

TDD for all Cities and Townships:
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All polling locations are accessible for voters with disabilities.

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& REGISTER OF DEEDS

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ST. JOSEPH COUNTY CLERK
& REGISTER OF DEEDS

SUZIE ROEHM
VAN BUREN COUNTY CLERK

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STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF VANBUREN
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

Estate of RUTH ANNE HERENDEEN and the RUTH ANNE HERENDEEN TRUST AGREEMENT
Date of Birth: March 27, 1933
TO ALL CREDITORS: NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, RUTH ANNE HERENDEEN, who lived at 29116 Cedarama, Marcellus, Michigan 49067, died on April 12, 2026. The decedent established the RUTH ANNE HERENDEEN REVOCABLE LIVING TRUST AGREEMENT on February 22, 1995. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to ERIC V. HERENDEEN, TRUSTEE of the RUTH ANNE HERENDEEN TRUST AGREEMENT within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
TRUSTEE:
ERIC V. HERENDEEN
Address: PO Box 563
Austin, MN 55912
ATTORNEY:
SYDNEY E. PARFET
Address: Howell Parfet Schau
350 East Michigan Avenue, Suite 500
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
Telephone: (269) 382-5300

State of Michigan
36th Judicial District
Judicial Circuit/ County Probate
ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION/ POSTING AND NOTICE OF ACTION
Case No. 26-075542-CH
Plaintiff Name:
Lorie Spangler and Sheila Marie Gaston
Plaintiff Attorney:
Albert W. Laaksonen, II P43920
Laaksonen Law Offices, P.C.
226 1/2 East Michigan Ave.
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-655-1035
V.
Defendant:
THE ESTATE OF ELEANOR ARENDT, DECEASED, AND HER UNKNOWN HEIRS, DEVISES AND ASSIGNEES
TO: All Defendants stated above
IT IS ORDERED:
1. You are being sued in this court by the plaintiff to **quiet title in a certain piece of real estate located at 38474 46th Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079, tax id#80-03-024-006-00.** You must file your answer or take other action permitted by law in this court at the court address above on or before _____. If you fail to do so, a default judgment may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint filed in this case.
2. A copy of this order shall be published once each week in the Courier Leader for three consecutive weeks, and proof of publication shall be filed in this court.
Date: 4/10/2026
Judge Susan Metzger

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Patrick Gillette; Atty: ANDREW BARNES - ANDREW BARNES; 1st Pub: 4/23/2026; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 p.m., on May 21, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT, ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT THE NUMBER BELOW IF YOU ARE IN ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY. Default has occurred in the conditions of a Mortgage (the "Mortgage") made by PATRICK GILLETTE, a single man, as Mortgagor(s), to Horizon Bank. The Mortgage is dated June 2, 2010 and was recorded June 11, 2010 at Liber 1536, Page 318 of Van Buren County Records. The amount claimed to be due on said Mortgage and unpaid at the date of this Notice is FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT AND 45/100 ($53,158.45) DOLLARS, including interest on the applicable indebtedness at a variable rate which is currently 5.00% per annum. This sum will increase as additional interest, costs, expenses, and attorney fees accrue under the Mortgage and its related note and which are permitted under Michigan law after the date of this Notice. No legal or equitable proceedings have been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage, and the power of sale in the Mortgage has become operative by reason of the default. At the date and time as referenced previously in this Notice, the Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the property herein described, or some part of them, at public auction, to the highest bidder, for the purpose of satisfying the amount due and unpaid on the Mortgage, along with interest due, the legal costs and charges of sale as allowed by statute and/or the Mortgage, and any taxes and insurance that the Mortgagee pays on or prior to the date of said sale. The property mentioned and described in the Mortgage, as located in the Township of Decatur, County of Van Buren, and State of Michigan, are more particularly described as follows: Commencing on the West line of Section 4, Town 4 South, Range 14 West, at a point where the centerline of the drainage ditch intersects said West Section line; thence South along said West Section line 200 feet; thence East at right angles to said West Section line 400 feet; thence North parallel with said West Section line to the center of said drainage ditch; thence Southwesterly along the centerline of said drainage ditch to the place of beginning; Address: 73131 42nd St., Decatur, MI 49045; Tax Parcel Nos.: 80-08-004-006-10 & 80-08-004-006-20; together with all existing or subsequently erected or affixed buildings, mobile/manufactured home or homes, improvements, and fixtures; all easements, rights of way, streets, roads, alleys, and public places, privileges, and appurtenances, public or private, now or later used in connection with the premises; and all rights to make divisions of the land that are exempt from the platting requirements of all applicable land division or platting acts, as amended from time to time. Attention Purchasers: the foreclosing Mortgagee reserves the right to cancel the sale prior to sale or to rescind this sale at any time. In that event, your damages, if any, will be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at the sale, plus interest. If the mortgaged property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The length of the redemption period will be one (6) six months from date of sale, unless the redemption period is shortened pursuant to MCL 600.3241a or MCL 600.3238, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of sale or as otherwise provided by statute. DATED: April 23, 2026 ANDREW W. BARNES (P70571) BUTZEL LONG P.C. ATTORNEYS FOR HORIZON BANK 317 Center Street South Haven, MI 49090 269-287-2010

(04-23)(05-14)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gary L Verstrate; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/16/2026; Atty File #: 26-000977-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on June 04, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Gary L. Verstrate and Linda F. Verstrate, husband and wife Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as mortgagee, for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: May 8, 2018 Recorded on May 18, 2018, Liber 1668, on Page 815, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): loanDepot.com, LLC Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Four Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Two and 88/100 Dollars ($104,122.88) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: THE WEST SEVEN AND ONE-HALF (7 1/2) ACRES OF THE NORTH FORTY-SEVEN AND ONE-HALF (47 1/2) ACRES OF THE NORTHEAST FRACTIONAL QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION 5 (5), TOWN TWO (2) SOUTH, RANGE FIFTEEN (15) WEST. Commonly known as 54961 24th Ave, Bangor, MI 49013 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. loanDepot.com, LLC Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1590678

(04-16)(05-07)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Linda Buell; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 4/9/2026; Atty File #: 26-003115; Insurer: GNMA
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on MAY 7, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Linda Buell, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Team Mortgage Company LLC, its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated March 29, 2024 and recorded April 30, 2024 in Liber 1765, Page 405 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by NewRez LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Eighty Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-Nine and 9/100 Dollars ($180,999.09). Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on MAY 7, 2026. Said premises are located in the Village of Mattawan, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as: Lot 3, Except the South 12 feet thereof, Block 1, Kinne's Addition to the Village of Mattawan, according to the recorded plat in Liber P of Plats, Page 163, Van Buren County Records. 57177 S Main St, Mattawan, Michigan 49071 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. FinCEN reporting will be required of all successful purchasers, absent a lawful exemption. Dated: April 9, 2026 File No. 26-003115 Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084 Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(04-09)(04-30)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Violet Hesser; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/2/2026; Atty File #: 26-000785-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on May 07, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Violet Hesser a/k/a Violet R. Hesser and Jack D. Hesser, wife and husband Original Mortgagee: The Huntington National Bank Date of mortgage: April 26, 2004 Recorded on May 5, 2004, Liber 1413, on Page 165, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): None Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Thirty-Five Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Three and 77/100 Dollars ($35,723.77) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Lot 53 of plat of Suburban Acres according to the recorded Plat thereof, Van Buren County Records. Commonly known as 20197 Meadow Dr, Gobles, MI 49055 The redemption period will be 12 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank Mortgagee/ Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1589321

(04-02)(04-23)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Robert Lee Smith; Atty: BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS - BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS; 1st Pub: 4/2/2026; Atty File #: 26-04850; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on May 14, 2026. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Robert Lee Smith to Rocket Mortgage, LLC, FKA Quicken Loans, LLC dated November 1, 2021 and recorded November 10, 2021 in Liber 1728 at Page 892, Van Buren County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC by assignment and/ or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $88,628.72. Said premises are located in Van Buren County, Michigan and are described as: Tax Id Number(s): 80-02-023-012-50 Land situated in the Township of Antwerp in the County of Van Buren in the State of MI PART OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 23, TOWN 3 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, ANTWERP TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN, DESCRIBED AS COMMENCING AT THE NORTH QUARTER POST OF SAID SECTION 23; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION, 376.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH ALONG SAID NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE, 277.76 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 30 SECONDS WEST, PARALLEL TO THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 788.09 FEET; THENCE NORTH PARALLEL TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION, 60.25 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 30 SECONDS WEST, PARALLEL TO THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 300.12 FEET TO THE WESTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF TERRITORIAL ROAD ALSO BEING THE EASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE PENN-CENTRAL RAILROAD; THENCE NORTH 44 DEGREES 10 MINUTES 52 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE, 300.00 FEET TO A LINE WHICH IS 376.00 FEET SOUTHERLY OF AND PARALLEL TO THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 21 MINUTES 03 SECONDS EAST, ALONG THE LAST DESCRIBED LINE, 879.13 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. BEING SUBJECT TO THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC IN THAT PART OF TERRITORIAL ROAD THAT LIES WITHIN THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION. NOTE: The Company is prohibited from insuring the area or quantity of the land. The Company does not represent that any acreage or footage calculations are correct. References to quantity are for identification purposes only. Commonly known as: 60441 26th St, Mattawan, MI 49071-9433 THE PROPERTY ADDRESS AND TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER LISTED ARE PROVIDED SOLELY FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES. Said property is commonly known as 60441 26th St, Mattawan, MI 49071. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: March 30, 2026 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 26-04850

(04-02)(04-23)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Christopher P Martin; Atty: Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates - Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates ; 1st Pub: 4/2/2026; Atty File #: MI 26 7094; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on April 30, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Christopher P Martin and Tanya Martin, husband and wife, whose address is 15566 41st Street, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026, as original Mortgagors, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for AmeriFirst Financial Corporation, being a mortgage dated April 15, 2022, and recorded on April 25, 2022 in Liber 1737 Page 234, Van Buren County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC, as assignee as documented by an assignment recorded in Van Buren County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-NINE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED NINETY-FOUR AND 49/100 DOLLARS ($129,194.49). Said premises are situated in the Township of Bloomingdale, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: THE SOUTH 20 ACRES OF THE EAST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER, SECTION 21, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 14 WEST, EXCEPT BEGINNING AT THE SOUTH QUARTER POST OF SECTION 21, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 14 WEST, THENCE NORTH 54 RODS TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING, THENCE WEST 165 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 290 FEET, THENCE EAST 165 FEET, THENCE NORTH 290 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. Street Address: 15566 41st Street, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. Dated: April 2, 2026 For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490) Johnson, Blumberg & Associates LLC 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602 312.541.9710 - Phone 312.541.9711 - Fax File No.: MI 26 7094

(04-02)(04-23)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gladis M. Kovarik; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 4/2/2026; Atty File #: 26-002958; Insurer: FHLMC
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on APRIL 30, 2026. Said premises are located in the Township of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as: THE NORTH 128 FEET OF THE EAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 11, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 14 WEST. 07010 37th St, Gobles, Michigan 49055 The redemption period shall be 12 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. FinCEN reporting will be required of all successful purchasers, absent a lawful exemption. Dated: April 2, 2026 File No. 26-002958 Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084 Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(04-02)(04-23)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Megan McLeod; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 4/23/2026; Atty File #: 26-000887-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 49c of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, 1966 PA 346, MCL 125.1449c, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on May 21, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Megan McLeod and Sean McDaniel, all as tenants in common Original Mortgagee: Neighborhood Loans, Inc. Date of mortgage: May 30, 2023 Recorded on July 3, 2023, Liber 1754, on Page 454, and re-recorded via Loan Modification recorded on May 30, 2025 in Liber 1779, on Page 490 Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Michigan State Housing Development Authority Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand Six Hundred Fifteen and 91/100 Dollars ($223,615.91) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: Commencing in the center of M-43 highway at a point South 45 degrees 21.5 minutes East 159 feet from the center of Section 24, Town 1 South, Range 17 West; thence South 45 degrees 18.5 minutes West 547.97 feet South parallel with the North and South 1/4 line 117.94 feet; thence North 45 degrees 18.5 minutes East 631.89 feet to center of M-43 highway; thence North 45 degrees 21.5 minutes West along center line 83.85 feet to point of beginning. Commonly known as 70907 M 43, South Haven, MI 49090 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 125.1449v, in which case

Continues on page 11

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

Continues from page 10

NOTICE - VAN BUREN lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: November 1, 2024 Recorded on November 13, 2024, Liber 1772, on Page 109, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): The Huntington National Bank Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Four Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Nine and 03/100 Dollars ($204,449.03) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: The East 28 rods of the West 53 rods of the Southeast Quarter of Section 34, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof Commonly known as 38724 24th Ave, Gobles, MI 49055 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. The Huntington National Bank Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1591287

(04-23)(05-14)

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village of Mattawan Council will hold a Public Hearing to consider adopting a budget and tax levy for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing scheduled May 11, 2026 will be held before the Village Council at 7:00 PM in the Village meeting room, at which all interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard.

The proposed budget will take effect July 1, 2026 and end June 30, 2027. The proposed tax levy is 4.2646 mills plus 6.0 mills for police special assessment. The Council may consider a different levy amount including a levy in excess of 4.2646 mills plus 6.0 mills for the police special assessment.

Budget Summary:

	Revenue	Expenses
General Fund	$ 951,470	$ 951,470
Major Street Fund	$ 2,120,523	$ 2,120,523
Local Street Fund	$ 403,996	$ 403,996
Police Operating Fund	$ 856,800	$ 856,800
DDA Fund	$ 406,000	$ 406,000
Building Inspection Fund	$ 77,525	$ 77,525
Police Cont. Education Fund	$ 16,516	$ 16,516
Justice Training Fund	$ 3,756	$ 3,756
Metro Act Fund	$ 113,499	$ 113,499
Sewer Fund	$ 1,370,200	$ 1,370,200
Water Fund	$ 937,805	$ 937,805
Motor Pool DPW	$ 316,550	$ 316,550
MPD Capital Project Fund	$ 90,000	$ 90,000
Total	$ 7,664,640	$ 7,664,640

This meeting will be held at the address below. Please send all written comments to:

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
offices@mattawanmi.com

(269) 668-2128

Jolie Storm-Artis
Village Clerk

A copy of the complete proposed budget can be reviewed at the Village offices, Monday - Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

• CLASSIFIEDS •

• WANTED •

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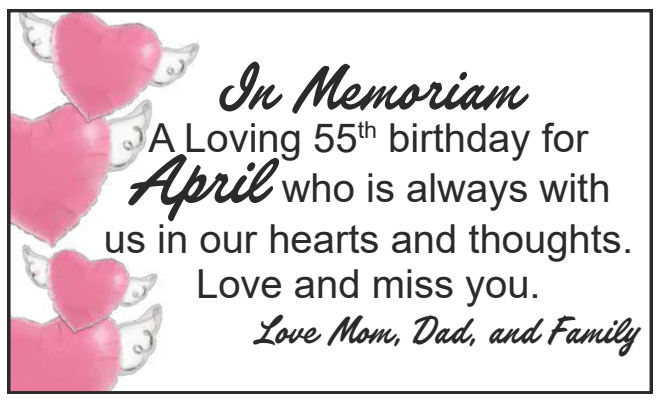
• AUCTION •

ALL SECURE SELF STORAGE will hold sale of abandoned property at a public sale pursuant in 540.521-570.527: Public Auction: 4/28/2026 at or after 9:30a.m. EST: 37404 W Red Arrow Highway Paw Paw: Jenna Joostberns, 1.



In Memoriam
A Loving 55th birthday for *April* who is always with us in our hearts and thoughts. Love and miss you.
Love Mom, Dad, and Family

NOTICE OF PAW PAW TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP AMENDMENT

The Paw Paw Township Board of Trustees approved amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map:

- A rezoning from Agricultural Farmland Protection (AGR) to Waterfront Area (WFR) with voluntary conditions and limitations (to only allow nonprofit recreation, health, educational, and social facilities): 40730 62nd Avenue, Paw Paw, MI 49079 (80-14-021-027-01).
- An amendment to Section 42-5.05 E (1) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the Planning Commission to waive the requirement of paved road access for special land uses in the WFR zoning district and to reduce the required setback for buildings 1,000 square feet or less from 100 feet to 50 feet.

Copies of related materials and the full Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map are available for review at the Paw Paw Township Hall during regular business hours (114 N. Gremps St., Paw Paw, MI, 49079). Relevant information is available by request- call 269-657-4340 or email clerk@pawpawtownship.org.

Planning Commission Public Hearing: March 17, 2026
Township Board Adoption: April 13, 2026
Publication Date: April 23, 2026
Effective Date: April 30, 2026

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT MEETING
N. PAW PAW ST. RECONSTRUCTION
DATE: Monday, May 11, 2026
TIME: 5:30 PM-6:30 PM
LOCATION: VBISD Conference Center, 490 S. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064

The Village of Lawrence will hold a public input meeting to discuss the N. Paw Paw St. Reconstruction Project that will run from the intersection of Bangor Rd. to the Village limits. The meeting is intended to inform residents of the upcoming project scope and

solicit public comment. This project will address drainage issues, ditching and widening of the road to the proper Class A classification. The Village Road Engineers will be presenting designs, and the Public Service Committee will be taking concerns and input from the public to address at the Village Council Meeting May 12th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Village Hall 157 N Paw Paw Lawrence MI 49064. This project is scheduled for the summer of 2027.

Those unable to attend are invited to submit written comments to the Village Council at the Village Hall Office located at 157 N. Paw Paw, Lawrence, MI 49064. *All written comments must be received no later than 4:00pm, May 4th, 2026.*

Persons with disabilities needing accommodations to participate should contact Clerk Kelly Johnson at 269-674-8161 or office@lawrencemi.org by Monday, May 4, 2026.

Project documents can be reviewed at the Village Hall Office.

The Annual Palmer Beach Association Meeting will be held at 1pm on Saturday May 23, 2026 at 44030 South St Paw Paw, MI 49079

PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY OF GOBLES

Notice is hereby given that a Public Accuracy Test for the May Special Election on May 5, 2026, will be conducted on Thursday, April 30, 2026 at 9:30 a.m. at the Gobles City Hall located at 105 E. Main St., Gobles, Michigan.

The Public Accuracy test is conducted to demonstrate that the program and computer that will be used to tabulate the results of the election have been prepared in accordance with the law.

Paula Sipes
Gobles City Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Bloomingdale Public Schools is accepting sealed bids for:
Auditorium Lighting & House Lighting Replacement Project

Bid documents, specifications, and submission requirements are available on the District website at https://www.bdalecards.com/page/building-and-grounds.

A mandatory site visit is required. Bidders must attend the scheduled pre-bid meeting or arrange a site visit with the District.

Bid Due Date: 5/4/26 by 12:00 p.m.
Location: Bloomingdale Public Schools Administrative Office, 629 E. Kalamazoo St., Bloomingdale, MI 49026

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at 12:15 p.m. on 5/4/26 at the Bloomingdale Public Schools Administrative Office, 629 E. Kalamazoo St., Bloomingdale, MI 49026

All bids must include a sworn familial relationship disclosure and Iran Economic Sanctions Act affidavit.

Bloomingdale Public Schools reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any irregularities in the best interest of the District.

VILLAGE OF PAW PAW
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR VILLAGE OF PAW PAW PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **The Village of Paw Paw Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 7 p.m. at Paw Paw Township Hall, located at 114 North Gremps Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079.**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE **that the item(s) to be considered at this Public Hearing include, in brief, the following:**

1. An update to the Village zoning ordinance to prohibit the use of shipping containers and semi-trailers as permanent storage structures on residential properties.

Public comment will be taken at the hearing or written comment may be provided to the Village Offices prior to the meeting. Additional information regarding this meeting is available at the Paw Paw Village Hall, 111 East Michigan Avenue between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or by sending a written request to PO Box 179, Paw Paw, MI 49079.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids should contact the Village Clerk no later than five business days prior to the meeting to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations.

Karla Tacy
Village of Paw Paw Clerk

Public Notice
Antwerp Township

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Public Accuracy Test for the May 5th, 2026 Special Election Has been scheduled for Tuesday, Apri 28th, 2026 at 10:00 AM in the Township Hall Meeting Room, 24821 Front Ave., Mattawan, Michigan.

The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the program and computer that will be used to tabulate the results of the election, counts the votes in the manner prescribed by law.

Chantel Reyna,
Antwerp Township Clerk

American with Disabilities (ADA) Notice
The township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon seven-(7) days' notice to Antwerp Township. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Antwerp Township by writing or calling.

Chantel Reyna
Antwerp Township Clerk
24821 Front Ave.
Mattawan, MI 49071
269.668.2615 x200

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
VAN BUREN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF A BROWNFIELD PLAN THE SOHA DRIFT LOFTS SOUTH HAVEN CHARTER TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS IN VAN BUREN COUNTY

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Van Buren County Board of Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing on a Brownfield Plan for SOHA Drift Lofts on the 30th day of April 2026, at approximately 12:50 p.m., to be held in the Don Hanson Board of Commissioners Chambers, 219 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079 to receive public comment on a Brownfield Redevelopment Plan to include therein the property located at 73rd Street, South Haven Charter Township, Van Buren County, Michigan. The following legal parcel is included in the "eligible property":

- Parcel ID # 80-17-011-032-61

The project consists of a parcel in South Haven Charter Township. The project will involve the redevelopment of a 10.16-acre site into 45 new owner-occupied housing units. Primary eligible activities include infrastructure and safety improvements to support housing activities.

The property qualifies as "eligible property" under the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, 1996 PA 381, as amended ("Act 381"), on the basis of meeting the definition of a "Housing Property" in Section 2(p)(ii).

The Brownfield Plan, which includes a site map and legal description of the parcel, is available for public inspection at the Van Buren County Administration Building. All aspects of the plan are open for discussion at the public hearing.

FURTHER INFORMATION may be obtained from Lisa Ransler, Community Services Director at 269-657-8200 ext. 1073 or ranslerl@vanburencountymi.gov.

THIS NOTICE is given by order of the County of Van Buren, Michigan.

Suzie Roehm
Van Buren County Clerk

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